**Psalm 50**

**Introduction**

The title of the Psalm ascribes the psalm to Asaph. In addition to Psalm 50, Asaph also wrote Psalms 73-83.

* Singer in the temple (1 Chron 6:39; 15:17-19; 16:5; children in 25:1)
* Prophet (2 Chron 29:30)

**50:1-6: Introduction**

Commonly in the Psalms, the worshiper addresses God or prays to God in some way throughout the Psalms, but in Psalm 50 God is addressing the nation of Israel. He calls those who are in a covenant relationship with Him (50:5) and He is going to judge His people (50:4, 6).

Nature is summoned by God (50:1, 4). This is covenant language as God called heaven and earth as witness to Israel’s faithfulness or unfaithfulness (Dt 30:19; 31:28; 32:1).

Heavens declare God’s righteousness (97:6; probably expect God’s glory like in 19:1).

**50:7-15: Purpose of sacrifices**

God spoke and nature responded (50:1), now God speaks and He wants His people to listen (50:7). He describes them as His people and He as their God (50:7) which is covenant language (Ex 6:7). Despite their relationship, God has some objections to the actions of the people (50:16-21). God does not object to their sacrifices (Isa 1:10-17).

**1. God is not dependent on us**

God did not need Israel’s sacrifices as if He were relying on them.

* Everything belongs to God (50:10-12)
  + Mine (3x in 10-12)
  + Ps 24:1

People of the ancient world thought the gods they worshiped were dependent on their sacrifices to survive. The false gods needed things from the people, but God does not need anything from us (Acts 17:25).

Instead, we are dependent on God!

* Don’t keep silent (50:3); He will not (50:21)
* Call in trouble (50:15)
* Acts 17:25, 28

This is not saying God does not want sacrifice (50:5, 14, 23)

Since we are dependent on God, then how should we approach Him in worship?

**2. Thanksgiving**

* 50:14

Since we need God then our worship should flow from a heart full of gratitude. This was Asaph’s job in the temple as one who sang songs of thanksgiving to the Lord. As the ark of Lord is brought into Jerusalem, Asaph and his relatives lead the nation in giving thanks (1 Chron 16:4-5, 7-8).

* Does my worship exude gratitude?
* We sing about counting our blessings, but do we?
* God has taken care of me while prices to everything have gone up
* We are so specific when we complain but then generic when we are thankful

***Spiritual blessings***

* Adopted into God’s family
* God dwells in me
* Physical health to worship
* Group that wants to serve the Lord together
* Peace that world does not understand
* Confidence in the future

Realizing that we are dependent on God will not only lead to thanksgiving but will result in humility.

**3. Vows**

On the surface level, the command to pay your vows might cause us to think that God requires us to keep our word. This is certainly part of it (Dt 23:21-23; Eccl 5:4). Yet, vows were sometimes paid after God granted a request.

Example: Hannah’s prayer for a child (1 Sam 1).

* 1 Samuel 1:11: Vow to the Lord
* 1 Samuel 1:24-28: Hannah pays her vow
* 1 Samuel 2:1-10: Hannah gives thanks to God

We have all made requests of God like Hannah, but do we respond with thanksgiving?

**4. Crying out to God**

* 50:15

We are in need God’s help! We are urged to call to Him in the day of difficulty and he will rescue us. When that happens, we are to respond by honoring Him.

Getting old is not for wimps, but there is benefit in age. You can reflect on all the times that God has helped and delivered you from a situation. This causes your confidence in each situation to rise because you know that God will help you through this situation just like He has all these times before. Our response then is to honor the one who continues to rescue us (50:15, 23).

***Worship benefits us***

a) Reminds us of our dependence on God

b) Keeps us humble

c) Gives us time to reflect on our blessings and be thankful

d) Calls us to honor the One who we owe everything to

e) Gives us confidence to place our trust in God

**Psalm 50, Part 2**

**Introduction**

We looked at Psalm 50:1-15, but now we want to turn our attention to the end of the Psalm.

God calls the people to give an account before Him (50:1-6)

God does not depend upon humanity (50:7-13), but humanity depends on God

How do we worship this God

* Thanksgiving (50:14)
* Pay vows with gratitude (50:14)
* Honor God when He saves (50:15, 23)

In 50:16-23 God is rebuking the wicked and calling them out. In ***50:1***, God speaks. In ***50:7***, God speaks to His people. ***Now, in 50:16, God speaks to the wicked.*** In 50:5 God spoke about His godly ones and those who had established His covenant with Him by offering their sacrifices. Now God addresses the wicked and some of the charges that He has against them.

**1. Why do you speak of God’s statutes and covenant?**

* My statutes (50:16)
* My covenant (50:16)
* My words (50:17)

God wants His people to tell others about Him

* Dt 6:4-9: Teach children about God
* Ps 64:9: Declare God’s works
* Jer 51:10: Tell of the vindication of God (prophecy of rescuing from Babylon captivity)

God wants us to be in a covenant with Him (50:5, 16), but he wants more than words

* Isaiah 29:13
* It is easier to talk about doing right than it is to do right
* Say: “I want to improve!”
* Are you taking the step to improve?
* Don’t speak of being in a covenant with God if we are not confirming to His image

**2. Hate discipline and cast God’s word behind you (17)**

We cannot claim to be followers of God and yet be unwilling to submit to His discipline.

* Prov 3:11-12: Don’t despise the discipline of the Lord
* Prov 5:12: Example of one who did
* Prov 12:1

How is hated of discipline shown? By “casting God’s word behind” them

* 1 Kings 14:9: Jeroboam
* Nehemiah 9:26

We cannot act like we have a desire to talk about God but have no desire for Him to guide us!

God is our Father and we must accept His correction and word! What is interesting is while Psalm 50 is written by Asaph, Psalm 51 is a famous Psalm written by David after he was confronted with his sin by Nathan the prophet. David made a huge mistake, but since he was not interested in just talking about God but accepted God’s word and discipline.

**3. Who we approve of… (18)**

How we respond to God’s discipline and word is shown by who we approve of. In 50:18-20 we read of three (3) of the ten (10) commandments being violated.

* Stealing (50:18; Ex. 20:15; Dt. 5:19; 8th Commandment)
* Adultery (50:18; Ex 20:14; Dt. 5:18; 7th Commandment)
* False witness (50:19-20; Ex 20:16; Dt 5:20; 9th Commandment)

Prov 24:1-2

Rom 1:32

Sometimes we silently approve of things that God has called us to avoid. God condemns those who engage in such evil and those who approve of such things! We live in a world that wants us to state our approval for all types of lifestyles. We have our free will and we can live any way that we chose to but if I am following the Lord I cannot approve of the things that He has condemned. It is not my duty to change God’s definitions of evil or good (Isa 5:20). What I give my stamp of approval to is noticed by God.

**4. Lips reveal the person**

* Evil
* Deceit
* Speak against
* Slander

If our mouths are always lying, running down someone else, and speaking evil of others then how do you think people are going to respond when we say we are followers of the Lord (50:16)?

Our words reveal our hearts (Mt 12:34).

**5. You thought I was just like you**

I am not sure everything that is meant by this statement…

a) Perhaps they misunderstood the silence of God for approval (50:3, 21)

b) Perhaps they misunderstood the patience of God (Rom 2:1-4; 2 Pet 3:8-9)

c) Perhaps they thought that God was evil like they were

What a terrible mistake to think that God will never challenge me to change and simply rubber stamp every action, thought, or word.

The goal is to become more like God not for God to imitate us!

**How does Psalm 50 teach us about Jesus?**

In 50:9-12 we are reminded that God is not dependent upon humanity. We are helpless to save ourselves and call to God in trouble (50:15). We could not offer a sacrifice great enough to bring our salvation, so God offers the sacrifice that brings us into a right relationship with Him.

In 50:18 we are reminded that humanity often prefers evil people, specifically thieves and adulterers. They approve of their actions. When Jesus came Pilate offered the crowd the choice between Jesus and Barabbas, they chose Barabbas, a robber (Jn 18:40). Yet, Jesus takes the judgment of the wicked and is torn to pieces on our behalf (50:23).

**50:22-23: Conclusion**

We will all stand before God. Either we will have forgotten Him, and He will tear us to pieces (50:22) or we will stand before the One we have honored (50:23).